

ARCHÆOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA.

ANNUAL REPORT

1913-14

EDITED BY

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CALCUTTA

SUPERINTENDENT GOVERNMENT PRINTING, INDIA

1917

Price—Rupees 20 or 30s.

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EXCAVATIONS AT AVANTIPURA.

THE ancient town of Avantipura is represented by the present village of Vāntipōr¹ situated on the right bank of the Vitastā (*vulgo* Vyath) river 18 miles above Srinagar. The city was founded by Avantivarman, king of Kashmir from 855 to 883 A.D. on an ancient site called Viśvaikasāra, which must have enjoyed sanctity even before the time of that king. It must have been a large city in ancient times. Vast masses of remains belonging to it can be seen to this day on the sides of the hill near the present town. These remains consist mostly of long stretches of stone walling,² which line what would seem to have been streets in ancient times, and rubble foundations of buildings such as we find at the site of Śrīnagarī, the ancient capital of Kashmir, and other ancient places in the valley. Among these remains there are large mounds of débris which at first sight may be mistaken for *stūpas* with their facings stripped off. I opened one small mound of this nature at Purānādhishṭhāna (*vulgo* Pāndrēthan), but, as it did not yield any relics of any kind, I infer that these mounds must have been terraces of wealthy people's houses or other important structures.

In addition to the remains noticed above there are more than half a dozen religious buildings of ancient date. The two largest of these are of considerable interest as they were founded by the same ruler as the city of Avantipura in honour of Viṣṇu and Śiva respectively. The passage in the Rājatarāṅgiṇī of Kalhaṇa which supplies this information is verse 45 of Bk. V, which Dr. Stein translates as follows: "Having built there, before his accession to the throne, the [shrine of Viṣṇu] Avantisvāmi, that wise [King] after obtaining sovereign power, erected then the [temple of Śiva] Avantīśvara." General Cunningham on the authority of a local tradition, identified the two temples mentioned in the above verse with the two large temples near the villages of Avantipura and Jaubrāra respectively. General Cunningham, however, was wrong in assuming the dedication of both of them to Śiva. Any one who is acquainted with the nomenclature of Kashmir temples need not be told that the terms *īśa* and *īśvara* are only used in the names of Śiva temples and that the use of '*svāmin*' or '*keśava*' is restricted to the names of Viṣṇu temples.³ General Cunningham's

¹ The reasons for this identification are set forth in Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* trans. by Stein, Bk. V, 44-45 n.

² Baron Hügel (*Travels*, p. 127) was of opinion that these stone walls supported level terraces for cultivation.

³ Kalhaṇa's *Rājat.* trans. by Stein, Vol. II, p. 369 n.

main argument in favour of his identification of the larger temple with that of Avantīśvara was that Avantivarman's advancement to the throne placed at his disposal increased means to erect more costly buildings. My excavations prove, and this is a fact which must have been clear even to General Cunningham (as parts of both of these buildings were visible above the ground even in his time), that the smaller temple must indeed have involved much greater expenditure than the other temple, owing to the elaborate carvings with which its imposing colonnades and its gateway are adorned. Consequently this argument of General Cunningham will not hold good, and it is therefore merely a matter of chance that his identification of the two temples turns out to be correct.

In the north-east corner of the colonnade of the smaller temple near the village of Avantipura, General Cunningham unearthed a pedestal, which he believed to be one of a Śiva *linga*. Even if this pedestal did actually belong to a Mahādēva image, it is more than doubtful if it actually belonged to this temple. My excavations have revealed scenes depicted on the stairs and other parts of this temple which are undoubtedly Vaiṣṇava, and there seems not a shadow of a doubt that this is the real Avantīsvāmi temple. The only Śaiva images excavated in this temple, that is the imperfect figures of Ardhanaṛīśvara¹ and Gaṇapati, which are contemporaneous with the temple, must have been transferred from some other temple, not improbably from the temple near Jaubrāra. All the other images discovered in this temple are either of Viṣṇu or other Vaiṣṇava deities. The excavation of the other temple, which is situated half a mile to the north-west of Avantipura, near the hamlet of Jaubrāra, is not yet complete. The courtyard, which has been mostly dug down to the original floor level, has not yielded any distinctly Śaiva relics yet, but the central shrine has still to be explored and may yield evidence which will finally settle its identity with the Avantīśvara temple.

Dr. Stein notes that Avantipura must have retained its importance long after the death of Avantivarman.² In the time of Kalhaṇa the temple of Avantīsvāmi was the scene of a siege, when its courtyard, protected by mighty stone walls, afforded shelter to the fugitive officers of Jayasīma (1128-1149).³

The earliest notice by a European writer, as far as I can discover, is a brief reference by Mr. Forster, who visited Bhyteepur (Avantipura) on the 3rd of May 1783⁴ in the reign of Timūr Shāh Durrānī. He says: "In the vicinity of Bhyteepur are seen the remains of an Hindu temple, which, though impaired by the ravages of time and more by the destructive hands of the Mahometans, still bore evident marks of a superior taste and sculpture." This statement can only apply to the Avantīsvāmi temple, as there are no carvings on the gateway of the other temple, which alone was visible above the surface at that time. Mr. Forster travelled to Srinagar from Islāmābād by water, and, whereas the Avantīsvāmi temple is quite close to the bank of the river, the other temple is some distance away and travellers seldom come out of their boats to see it.

¹ See below page 53, Pl. XXVIII a & f.

² *Rājat.* trans. by Stein, Vol. II, p. 460.

³ *Ibid.* VIII, vv. 1429 & 1474.

⁴ *Journey from Bengal to England*, Vol. II, p. 9.

Mr. Moorcroft¹ visited Avantipura in 1823, on his way from Srinagar to Vernag. As he travelled by road, he passed the larger temple, *i.e.*, the temple of Avantīśvara, first. The road then ran between the ridge and the temple, as he passed the temple on his right. He describes the central shrine as a "confused mass of stones," but rightly states that it "must have been a square temple with four doors approached by broad and spacious porches and enclosed by a wall." He is wrong, however, in giving the enclosure wall "four gates opposite to the doors of the central structure," as there never have been more than one gateway. About the temple at Avantipura, *i.e.*, the Avantisvāmi temple, he makes the same mistake, for he assumes that the quadrangle surrounding this temple was also provided with four gateways. Mr. Moorcroft was of opinion that "earthquakes must have been the chief agents" in the destruction of the temples of Kashmir.

Mr. Vigne, who was in Kashmir² about the year 1837, has very little to add to our knowledge of these temples. So completely was the quadrangle round the Avantisvāmi temple buried under the earth, that what stonework did appear above the surface was readily mistaken by Mr. Vigne for "the base of the colonnade." In connection with the desertion of the town of Avantipura Mr. Vigne's remarks deserve to be reproduced here. He says: "the want of regular irrigation must always have been troublesome, but I should think that the town began to be deserted when the temples were destroyed by Butshekan, or when the ground on which Srinagar stands was first made habitable by draining." We note that the foundation of the new capital of Kashmir had nothing to do with the desertion of the ancient city of Avantipura, as that event took place many centuries before Sikandar But-shikan. Baron Hügel,³ who travelled in Kashmir in 1835, describes these temples as "two falling Buddhist temples . . . the first called Vencádati Devi . . . the smaller one, called Ventimádati." The legends he quotes regarding the founder of the city and these temples do not deserve any notice.

The most accurate and perfect accounts of the Kashmir temples that have yet been written we owe to that great *savant* General Sir Alexander Cunningham, whose "Essay on the Arian Order of Architecture" in the J.A.S.B. for 1848 is full of useful information about the antiquities of Kashmir. In connection with the temples of Avantipura, General Cunningham has left us ground plans of both temples as far as their outlines could be ascertained at his visit. The only remains then visible above the surface consisted of the superstructure of the gateways, mere lines of stonework to mark the colonnades and heaps of stones in place of the central shrines. These plans are, therefore, naturally conjectural and defective in many respects. A comparison of these with the drawings which accompany this article will show the shortcomings of the former. General Cunningham excavated a small portion of the peristyle, about 20 feet in length in the north-east corner of the quadrangle of the Avantisvāmi temple, and as he found the carvings on the trefoiled recesses which he unearthed quite uninjured, he concluded that the silting of the temple must have taken place before the time of Sikandar But-shikan. He says: "The final and complete silting up of the quadrangle

¹ *Travels*, Vol. II, p. 243 sq.

² *Travels in Kashmir* Vol. II, p. 25

³ *Travels*, 1845, p. 127 & 141.

whether by the gradual process of years or some sudden catastrophe, had fortunately been the means of preserving the greater part of this peristyle from the defacing fingers of time as well as from the destroying hand of Mahomedan bigotry ; perhaps at some future day to be unveiled by European archæologists in all its virgin beauty." The subjoined account of my excavations at this temple will show to what great extent General Cunningham's remarks have proved true ; for there is no doubt that the courtyard had filled up with silt for more than two-thirds of the height of the colonnade already before the time of Sikandar, and it has been most gratifying to me to find the lower parts of the colonnades as well as the delicate carvings upon them in all the " virgin beauty " predicted for them by General Cunningham.

Mr. Cole's description of the Avantipura temples is mostly a repetition of General Cunningham's opinions, but we are indebted to him for the valuable photographs he has left us of these remains as they existed in the year 1868.¹

AVANTISVAMI TEMPLE.

The above paragraphs will show the state of oblivion into which this important monument had fallen² when the excavations described in this article were taken in hand. In 1903, Dr. Vogel visited the remains of this temple and proposed valuable measures of conservation to the gateway, but it was Sir John Marshall who in 1907 drew the attention of the Darbar to the desirability of excavating " the place thoroughly at the earliest opportunity, as it seems certain that most, if not all, of the peristyle can be recovered as well as those portions of the plinth of the temple itself and its entrance porch, which are now buried." Sir John Marshall estimated the cost of the excavations to be roughly 5,000 rupees, which is very near the actual expenditure incurred. Sir John Marshall's recommendations were readily accepted by the Darbar, and the excavation of the temple was taken in hand by Mr. Chatterji in 1910 (Samvat year 1967). Mr. Chatterji exposed the greater part of the peristyle and he also excavated part of the courtyard, but his excavations terminated at a level between six and seven feet below the present ground level, *i.e.*, quite eight feet above the floor of the courtyard. Consequently the whole of the edifice beneath this level, the floor of the courtyard with the shrines in the corners, the several stairs, the central shrine and the basement of the peristyle all remained unexcavated. In the way of portable antiquities Mr. Chatterji's excavations brought to light a few copper coins, a few fragmentary images and fragments of charred birch-bark manuscripts of a comparatively late date. The excavations remained in abeyance until they were resumed under my supervision in the autumn of 1913, and it was only by continuing the diggings through the last summer and the greater part of the present, that the excavation has been completed. The work was rendered extremely laborious and difficult by the presence of huge quantities of rough boulders with which the courtyard had been filled up. These boulders had no place in the construction of any part of the original temple, which is composed entirely of well-cut and squared stones, but some of them

¹ *Illustrations of ancient buildings in Kashmir*, pp. 25-26 and accompanying plates.

² Mr. Cole has left us a nice photograph of the temple as it existed in his time, *vide Illustrations of ancient buildings in Kashmir*, 1869, Pl. 20, 68.

had been employed in later additions to and renewals of parts of the edifice for diverse purposes. We shall have to refer to this later on.

The excavation of the central shrine was a task of exceptional difficulty. This structure had suffered most, and what remained of it was a confused mass of stones. It was expected that, when the excavation was finished, it might be possible to reconstruct some part of the central shrine, and, accordingly, before the excavation began, each block on each side was carefully numbered, and photographs were taken of each side of the shrine, so that there might be no difficulty afterwards in identifying the different stones. The blocks were then gradually rolled down to the floor of the courtyard, where they have been stacked neatly. The excavations reveal the fact that the central shrine had been completely destroyed and its material mostly carried away to the Capital and used up in the construction of modern houses. I found several architectural stones lying on the bank of the river and had them shifted to the temple.

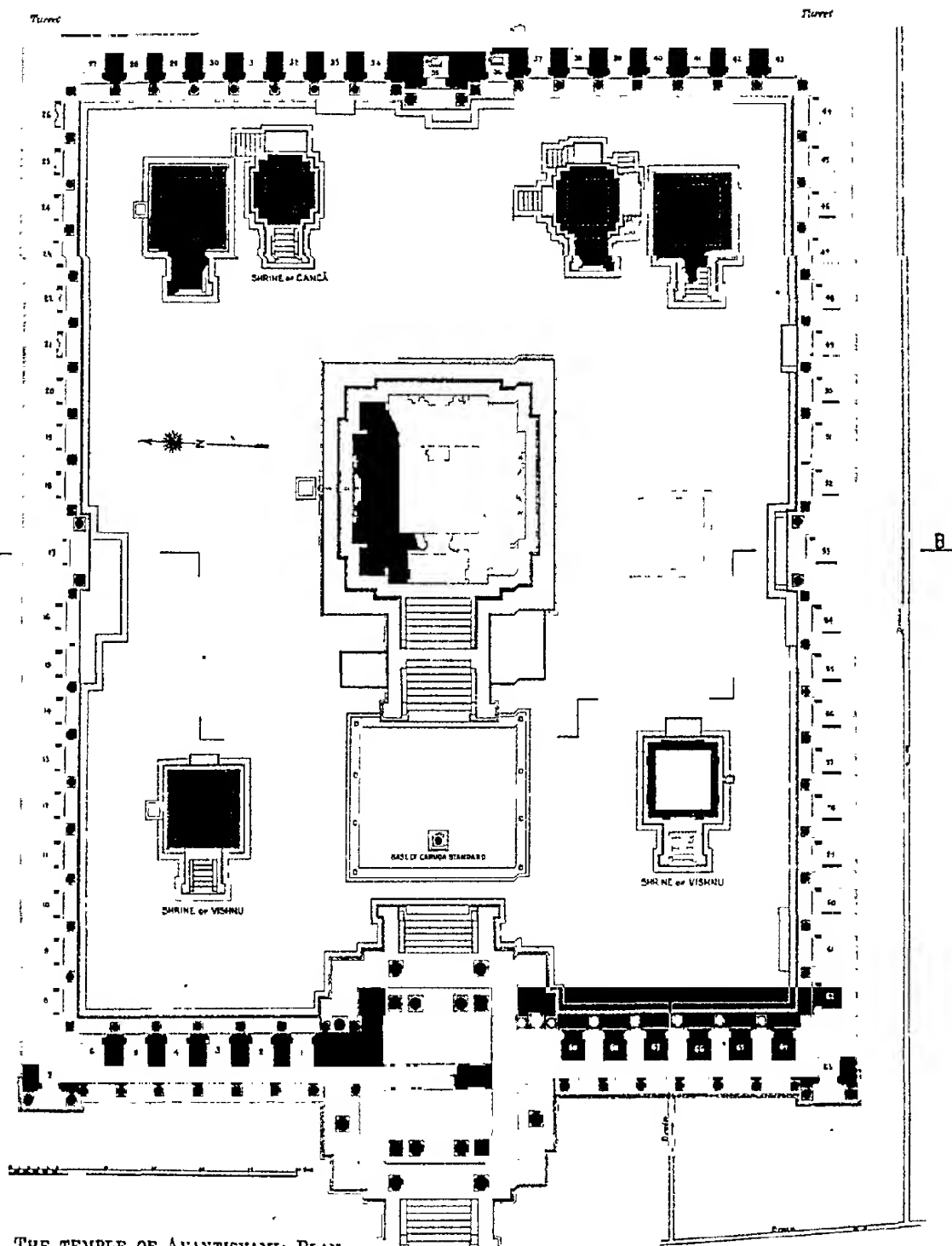
The only parts of the central shrine which have remained undisturbed, are three corners, the fourth or south-east corner having altogether disappeared. The greatest extant height of the walls occurs on the north side (Plate XXVI, c) where it is standing to a height of 11'10" above the top of the plinth. This part of the wall is the left pedimental pilaster of the niche on the north side.

The central shrine (Plate XXVI, d) measures about 33' square externally. The entrance was in the west wall, the remaining three sides being relieved with niches of the same dimensions as the doorway in the west side. It will be noted that this is exactly the plan of the central shrine of the Buniār temple and the temple near Uri, commonly known as the *Phaṭhā Mandir* or the dilapidated temple. The pilasters, which carried the pediments on each side, project about 9" from the face of the wall. Of the entrance on the west side only one stone of the left hand jamb is now visible above the plinth. The pilaster flanking it has a trefoiled niche, which must have contained a divine figure now cut away. Several stones of the pediments on the remaining three sides have been rescued from the *débris*. They are carved in the usual fashion. The spandril was adorned with well-executed figures of *Garuḍa*, the vehicle of *Vishṇu*. The same motive occurs on the walls of the entrance porch, and upon the caps of the pilasters which flank the cells of the peristyle. A block of stone sloped on two consecutive sides, which came to light in the fallen *débris* of the central shrine, is interesting, inasmuch as it affords useful evidence in regard to the form of the roof of the shrine, which must have been gabled like that of the *Pāndrēṭhan* and *Pāyar* temples. General Cunningham advanced the theory that the temples of Kashmir had wooden roofs, but none of the temples of Kashmir whose roofs have survived favour his view.

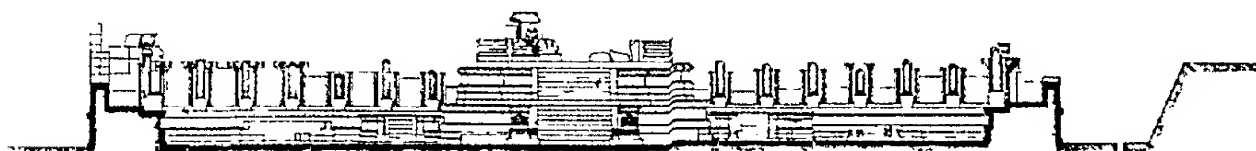
Nothing has been found of the principal image which was worshipped in the central shrine, except two fragments of its pedestal,¹ which came to light in the eastern portion of the courtyard. The mortice which held the tenon of the image is 1'5" broad, 1'1" wide and 1' deep. The general character and form of the principal image

¹ The pedestal (*pīṭha* or *bhadrāpīṭha*) is an essential accessory of the image, and the construction of pedestals of images was considered in Kashmir almost as meritorious as the consecration of divine images. These pedestals are provided with a conduit (*enāna-drōṇi*) for carrying away water with which images are bathed daily. The conduits were generally carved with a figure of the vehicle (*vāhana*) of the deity and were often made of silver (cf. *Kaṭhāna, Rājat.* edited by Stein, II, v. 46).

EXCAVATIONS AT AVANTIPURA, KASHMIR.

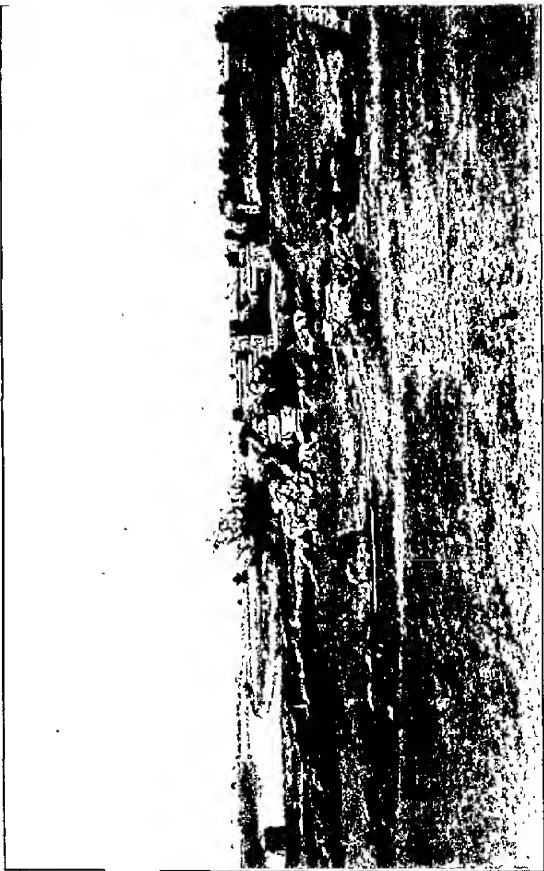


a, THE TEMPLE OF AVANTISVAMI: PLAN.

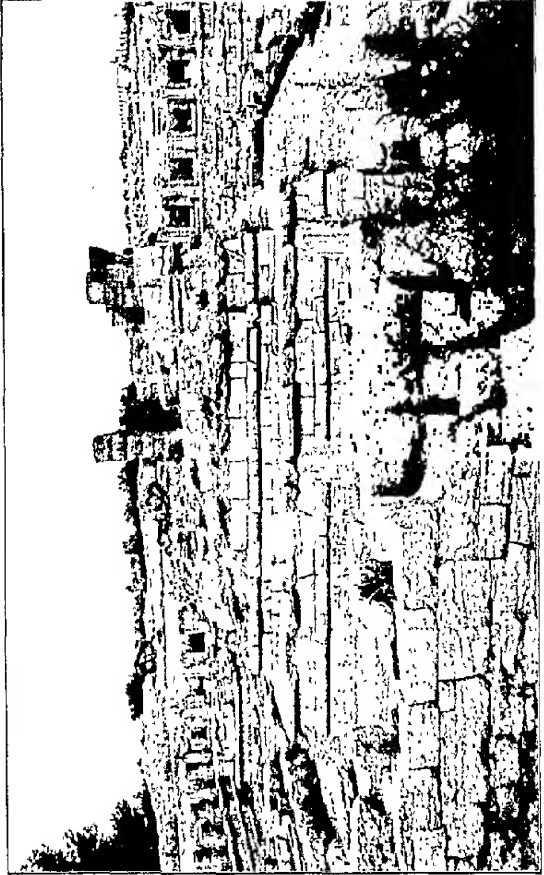


b, THE SAME: SECTION.

EXCAVATIONS AT AVANTIPURA: THE AVANTISVAMI TEMPLE.



a. VIEW FROM EAST BEFORE EXCAVATION.



b. VIEW FROM EAST AFTER EXCAVATION.



c. NORTH FACE OF CENTRAL SHRINE.



d. APPROACH TO CENTRAL SHRINE.

Photos. Discovered & printed at the offices of the Survey of India & Co., Ltd.

can, however, be guessed from several replicas of it, which must have been placed in the cells of the peristyle and in other parts of the building. One (ht. 3' 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ ") of these statues' (Plate XXVIII, b-c) which is the best preserved of all was found on the floor of the courtyard not far from the central shrine in the north-west corner of the courtyard. Its pedestal was found quite close to it. The image is carved in the round and is, like all the Vishṇu images so far noticed in Kashmir, four-faced, the proper right face being one of a lion and the left of a boar, no doubt in allusion to the lion and boar incarnations of the deity. The central head has a three-peaked coronet studded with diamonds and rosettes of pearls. There is a prominent circular dot between the eye-brows to indicate the *tilaka*. We notice large circular ear-ornaments, a torque, a long garland, jewelled armlets and other ornaments. A lozenge-shaped diamond on the chest represents the *śrīvatsa*. The only garment worn is a *dhōṭī* secured at the upper end with a belt. There is a short sword at his right side, and between his feet is the upper part of the goddess *Pṛīthvī*, represented as rising from the earth, much in the same style as in the representations of the temptation of Gautama Buddha by the Evil One. The earth goddess (*Bhū-dēvī*) is sometimes depicted in Vishṇu images as his second consort, owing presumably to her association with the god in his Boar-incarnation, when the latter uplifted her from the depths of the lower regions. Vishṇu has four arms, the upper right and left hands holding a fully expanded lotus flower with a short stalk (*sanāla-kamala*) and a conch respectively. The lower hands rest on the heads of two chauri-bearers, of whom the one on the proper right of the deity is a female, while that on the other side is a male. A point in connection with this class of statues which cannot yet be explained, is the presence of a demoniacal head carved on the back of the statue, as if it were a fourth head of the deity. As is customary with these figures, the demon in question has grinning teeth, protruding tusks and eyes, a short chin and terrific eye-brows. His hair is tied up in a big knot. We notice a large number of holes cut into the image, which must have been meant for adorning the statue with sticks of flowers or *dhūpa* on festive occasions. The pedestal (2'9" by 1'7" by 1'4") is furnished with a spout which carried off the washings of the image. The statue fully illustrates the excellence of workmanship of which the Kashmiri sculptors of the 9th century were capable.

In many respects the statue described in the preceding paragraph resembles two Vishṇu images, one from Saho¹ in Chamba State and the other in Lahul,² both of the pre-Muhammadan period, though somewhat later than the Avantipura image. In connection with the Saho image, Dr. Vogel was informed that the female figure between the feet of Vishṇu was Lakshmī. It is more probably *Bhūmi-dēvī*. In both the Lahul and Saho images, the upper hands of the god rest on the head of two chauri-bearers, a male and a female—both evidently human attendants. As I have not got back views of the Saho and Lahul images, I am unable to ascertain if they have the fourth demoniacal head on the reverse.

This three or four-faced type of Vishṇu image seems to be peculiar to the hills of the Punjab. The common type of the plains of India, which obtained in the mediæval period, is best illustrated in an image preserved in the Museum of Archæology at

¹ Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba State*, p. 248, and Pl. XXXIX, a.

² This image has not yet been published.

Mathurā.¹ Here Vishṇu has only one face and his attendants are Śrī, holding a lotus to right, and Sarasvatī holding a lute (*vīṇā*) to left. Instead of the half-bodied Earth-goddess we notice a figure of Garuḍa on the front of his seat.

The plinth on which the central shrine stands is in a very good state of preservation and similar in design to that of the temple of Buniār and the temple above Uri. It consists of two platforms placed one above the other. The lower platform measures 47'10", the upper 38'10". They are designed in the usual fashion.

The entrance of the shrine was gained by a flight of steps with well-built flank walls, which have been found in an admirable condition. The stair (Plate XXVI, *d*) projects 19'6" from the face of the plinth, the mouldings on the latter being continued on it. The steps are composed of the same kind of stone as the temple, and are so carefully smoothed that at first sight they appear to be made of black marble. The Mughal pavilion in the innermost garden of the Shalamar at Srinagar is made of the same material, but has been given a better polish. At the front of each of the flank walls we observe an interesting panel crowned with a cap, with elegant carvings consisting of lions' heads alternating with geese or flower plants and square lotus rosettes above. The subject of the scene on the left wall (Plate XXVII, *d*) is a six-armed image of Vishṇu seated in easy posture on a bench with curved legs, covered with an ornamental cloth edged with a row of bells or tassels. To his right and left are Satyavāmā and Śrī. The emblems in the right hands of Vishṇu are a mace (*gadā*), a garland and an ear of corn (*mañjarī*). The uppermost left hand has a bow (*pināka*), and the lowermost a lotus² bud. The middle left hand rests on the left breast of the goddess on that side. In front of the seat on which Vishṇu sits are three birds, apparently parrots. The *tilaka* on the forehead of the central figure is a circular dot. Those on the foreheads of the goddesses are dots enclosed in crescents. The panel is enclosed in square pilasters of quasi-Greek type, surmounted with a multifoil arch with a goose in each spandril. The subject (Plate XXVII, *e*) depicted on the front of the other flank wall is identical, except that the figure of Vishṇu is four-armed and his forehead-mark is similar to that of the goddesses. It is interesting to note that similar scenes also occur on a Vishṇu temple built by Lalitāditya at Andarkot, which was noticed by Dr. Bühler and the entrance porch of which has been exposed by myself. The subject carved on the inner side of the right flank wall (Plate XXVII, *c*) of the stair is also quite clear. The central figure presumably represents the youthful Kṛishṇa standing facing with a flower bud in each hand. To his right and left are archangels bringing presents of sweets and garlands in the upper corners. To the proper right of Kṛishṇa we notice a pair of figures, the lower one being a female (cowherdess), who is feeding a cow from a bowl. The other figures on this side and the four figures on the other side may be cowherd boys (*gōpa*). The sculpture corresponding to this on the opposite wall (Plate XXVII, *a*) is doubtful. The composition represents a two-armed bearded figure standing in the middle with archangels to his right and left in the upper corners. The central figure holds a rosary in the left hand. It is not impossible that it is Brahmā. To the proper right of Brahmā below the two archangels are four figures, the upper two of which might be

¹ Vogel, *Catalogue of the Arch. Museum at Mathura*, No. D. 35, Pl. XVIII.

² Some of these emblems are the same as those enumerated in the following half verse from *Vṛhat-sūktaratnākara* Bombay (p. 38). दारिचर्मासिगद्गुचापपाशान्दधानोऽष्टगुणोऽष्टबाहुः as the emblems of the eight-armed. Nārāyaṇa.

the donors, possibly Avantivarman the king and his queen with joined hands. The royal character of the king is brought out by a turban which is not noticed in the other male figures. The female figure behind the queen must be her attendant, as she carries a garland for her, while the male figure lower down is a common votary, like those on the proper left side of the deity.

The courtyard, which is paved throughout in stone slabs, measures 174 feet east to west by 148' 8" north to south. The outer dimensions of the surrounding peristyle are 204 feet by 173 feet respectively. Rainwater from the courtyard was carried off through a stone built drain about a foot wide which begins to the south of the gateway and runs out under the wall between cells Nos. 66 and 67 and joins the bigger drain outside.

At a distance of 21 feet to the west of the stair to the central sanctuary is a moulded base, 3'10" square, which must have supported a column crowned with a Garuḍa. The column and the Garuḍa have not been recovered. I have unearthed bases of similar columns in other temples, and the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* records that the Gōvardhanadhara temple at Parihāsapura had a large Garuḍa-dhvaja. Mr. Vigne imagined that the fragmentary Mahādēva image (*J.A.S.B.*, 1848, Plate VII) at Pāndrēthan represented a part of the Parihāsapura Garuḍa standard.

A noteworthy feature of the temple are four shrines, one in each corner of the quadrangle. They are all equal in size, 16'6" square, and consist of a square plinth moulded like that of central shrine, and must have been built at the same time as the sanctuary. They all face towards the west and their superstructures have disappeared. Between the shrines in the eastern corners of the quadrangle are two smaller shrines, which must be somewhat later in date. Each one of them has a reservoir outside it to receive the water with which the image was daily washed. The images that were originally placed in these shrines were all destroyed except one.¹ Fragments of others have been found and will be noticed later on.² The image that escaped destruction belonged to the shrine in the north-west corner of the quadrangle. The pedestal of the image which was worshipped in the shrine in the south-west corner measures 2'7½" by 1'10½" by 1'6½". The spout has a well-cut Garuḍa head. The pedestal belonging to the bigger shrine in the south-east corner is 2'6" by 1'10" by 1'5". The base of the statue which has remained in the top bears three pairs of feet, the middle pair of which, with the imperfect bust of the earth-goddess, belonged to a statue of Viṣṇu cut in the round, and the others to the attendant figures. The pedestal found near the bigger shrine in the north-east corner measures 2'3" by 1'7" by 1'4". On the spout of this we notice a crocodile (*makara*) head with a string of beads suspended from its snout. No fragments of the image which stood on this pedestal have come to light. But, if we remember that the crocodile is the vehicle of the river goddess Ganges, we might assume that this shrine was dedicated to that goddess. Images of the river goddesses are carved on the entrance of the gateway to the colonnade of this temple, on the portico of the temple of the sun or Mārtāṇḍa and other temples. Perhaps the goddesses were sometimes also given separate shrines in the compounds of the bigger temples.

¹ See page 45 above

² See list of sculptures below.

The colonnade consists of 69 cells and is built upon a basement 5'3" in height. The average interior dimensions of the cells are 3'7" to 3'9½" by 4'10" in width. The parti-walls are 3' 6" to 4' thick, those flanking the middle cells of each row are thicker, being 7' to 7' 9" in width. The cells are preceded by a peristyle resting on 16-sided columns with plain square bases and capitals (Plate XXIX, *a*), which are of the same design as the capitals of the twelve large pillars in the corners of the colonnade. The pillars in the corners of the colonnades, those on each flank of the middle shrines of the wings and four others in the front and rear of the gateway are square. There are altogether 66 round columns of the smaller size, twelve large ones on the four sides of the gateway and eighteen smaller columns outside the front row. The cells were entered by doorways headed with trefoiled arches enclosed in pediments of the usual type. The latter rested on gracefully carved pilasters. The commonest patterns which adorn these pilasters consist of zigzags ornamented with rows of dots, lotus and other ornaments as in cell No. 13, vertical rows of vases with lines of dots, sometimes alternating with rows of geese (as in cell No. 16), spirals, etc. The pilasters of cell No. 46 are decorated with vertical rows of trefoiled niches containing divine figures attended by archangels and human attendants.

The entablature over the colonnade has been everywhere thrown down except in the case of a few cells in the north row. The total height of the colonnade, including the basement up to the foundation of the ceiling, is about 18'. No blocks which were employed in the construction of the roof have yet been recognised anywhere in the débris. The roof may have been flat and composed of horizontal stones. This assumption receives support from the following statement of Mr. Moorcroft regarding the colonnade of the Mārtāṇḍa temple in his time "The roofs had generally fallen in, but where remaining were of large flat slabs of stone."¹ On the other hand General Cunningham has conjectured very plausibly, that the roof was triangular in section. The middle cells of the colonnades must have been gabled, like that of the central shrine. The middle shrine of the east wing contains a stone pedestal, 2' 2" by 2' 10" by 1' 7", placed against the back wall. The image which stood on it must have been destroyed. There are no pedestals in the other side shrines, but it is possible that some of the smaller recesses also held statues, since pedestals are *in situ* in some of them. The cells in the western corners of the colonnade are made to open outwards, as they could have no direct communication with the courtyard in the middle. The other two corners are solid and might have been crowned with some sorts of turrets or other ornaments. On the outside the walls of the colonnades are plain save for shallow pilasters which project from the centre of the parti-walls. The western row of cells has a series of columns on the outside as well as on the interior, but the cells themselves are closed with plain walling on the outside.

The gateway to the colonnade must have been a very imposing structure.² It is, as usual, divided into two chambers of identical dimensions, literally covered with

¹ *Travels*, Vol. II, p. 256. On reconsideration of the question, I am of opinion that General Cunningham's view that the roof of the colonnade was triangular in section is more plausible.

² General Cunningham remarks (*J. A. S. B.*, 1848, p. 280) that the width of the gateway was made equal to that of the projecting porches of the central shrine. In reality the width of the gateway is equal to the total width of the central shrine.

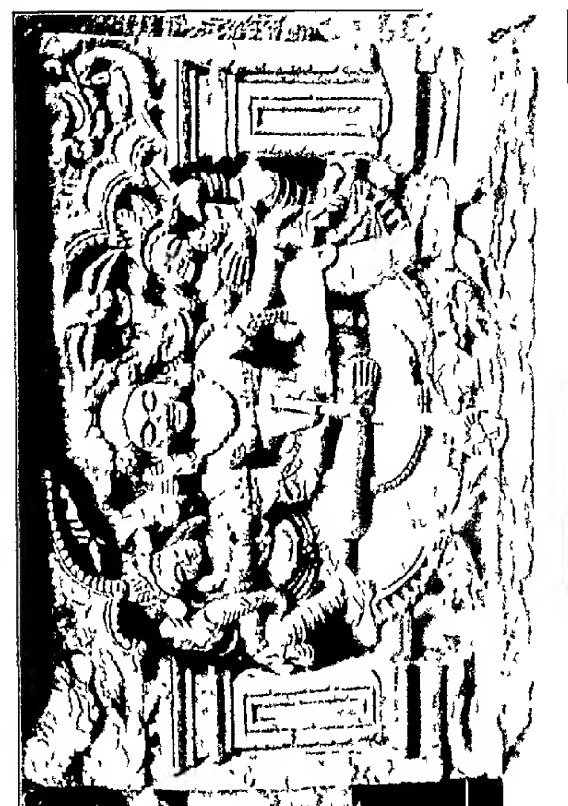


FIGURE 1. INSCRIPTION TO THE LEFT OF THE RELIEF

figure decoration. The entrance, which occurs in the middle wall, is 6' 6" wide and was provided originally with wooden doors. Each of its flanks was adorned with a vertical row of three niches with double pedimental roofs supported on columns of the usual type, the whole row being enclosed in an ornamental frame. The sides of the latter are adorned with amorous couples supported by four-armed seated atlantes. On either side of this frame are scrolls of arabesque. The niches contain divine figures which were covered with verdigree and could not be recognized. The verdigree has now been removed, but the figures in the upper niches on each side are too much defaced to be identified. The lowest niche on the left flank contains a two-armed figure of Ganges with a lotus stalk in right hand, and a water pot in the left. She is standing on her vehicle, the crocodile, which has a coiled tail and has raised its snout upwards towards the deity. A female attendant standing to her proper right holds an umbrella over her head. The niche corresponding to it on the other side contains a figure of Yamunā similarly depicted. Her vehicle, which is a tortoise, is, however, obliterated. Below each of these niches is a spirited scene showing a group of three figures between a pair of walnut trees. The middle figure is a prince and the other two female figures, all three seated on separate cushions. The prince presents a bowl of sweets to the lady to his left. On the front of the cushions are three parrots. The side walls of the chamber have each a single large niche enclosed in a similar frame. These niches also contained figures of the two river goddesses similarly delineated. Below the niche which contains the figure of Gangā we notice two friezes of considerable interest. The upper frieze represents a row of nine medallions, each containing a four-armed figure of Garuḍa. His lower hands are in each case joined before the chest. The emblems in the upper hands are two of the four objects: a vase, a garland, a mace and a lotus flower.

The walls of the gateway are standing up to the cornice, 20' 3" high above the floor of the gateway. No parts of the roof have survived. It was presumably of the usual gabled type, but no complete examples of gateways have come down to us except the gateway to the Buniār temple, which is only a little better preserved than the gateway of this temple. The form of the roof, therefore, cannot be precisely ascertained. So much, however, is certain, that it was supported both on the front and the rear on four columns, the bases of all of which are quite intact. The middle columns, which were placed wider apart than the side ones for purposes of passage into the temple, are round, 9' 4" in girth at the base and 24-sided. Each side is flat, and a line of rough surface runs down each side. This is the case with all the round columns of the colonnade also. May we assume that they were meant to be fluted like classical columns but the flutes could not be cut for some unknown reason. Fragments of these columns were found right on the floor level of the courtyard, showing that these columns fell down before the floor was covered with débris. The bases of these columns are square and plain (*vide plan*). The bases of the side columns are moulded. The columns which occupied the eastern corners of the gateway must have stood in position until only two or three centuries ago. A fragment of the square column in the south-east corner is illustrated in Plate XXVII, *b*. The side which faced the wall of the gateway is naturally left rough. The other sides are nicely carved. The carvings on the principal face may be seen in the photograph referred to.

Horizontal lintels rested on the columns and the side walls, and supported the superstructure of the gateway, which consisted of a blank trefoil arch enclosed in an imposing pediment. Each lintel consisted of three pieces, which met on the top of the two middle columns. One of these pieces, which belonged to the east façade, measures 9' 2" long by 5' 5" wide by 3' 3" thick. The carvings on the principal face of the lintel consist of six rows of birds and other ornamental devices. The capitals, which rested on the square columns in the corners of the gateway unlike the capitals of all other columns in the temple, are provided with projecting brackets similar to those in the Buniār temple.

A feature of this gateway, which is found in only one other example, namely, in the Mārtāṇḍa temple, is the open porticoes, one in front of each face of the structure, supported on an extra pair of columns of the same dimension and character as the middle columns of the gateway. The lintels which rested upon these are huge blocks of stone profusely carved on all faces which were meant to be visible. Parts of these porticoes must have stood in position until comparatively recent times. Only one column with its superimposed lintel is now standing outside the north-west corner of the gateway. The other column with its lintel, which was standing on the south side of the gateway on the occasion of Moorcroft's visit, has fallen down since his time and was naturally found quite near the surface of the ground. For one of the caps of these porticoes see Plate XXIX, b.

The gateway is furnished with stairs, on east and west, of the same design as the stair to the central shrine. Both of them are partly ruined. The north flank wall of the outer stair has, on the front, the same Viṣṇu scene as we observe on the stair of the central shrine. The inner side, however, shows a door-keeper (*dvārapāla*). The panels on the south flank wall are missing.

The panels on the front of the flank walls of the inner stair to the gateway depict the same subject, namely, Gōpāla-Kṛiṣṇa and a cowherdess (*gōpī*) seated embracing each other. The northern panel, which is better preserved than the other, also shows a cowherd boy playing on a flute (*vaṁśī*) at the proper right end of the composition and a female figure on the other side. The panels on the inner sides of the flank walls contain door-keepers (*dvārapāla*), each of which holds a mace.

COINS.

The total number of coins discovered in the Avantisvāmi temple is 121, besides some badly defaced ones. These are all of copper except a single one of Maḥmūd Shāh Durrānī, which is of silver. The earliest of these coins are a few coins of Tōramāna of the usual type. About a dozen coins belong to the ancient Hindu rulers of Kashmir. Only four go to the share of the Durrānī Paṭhān rulers, and there are a few modern coins of the Dogra Maharajas. All the rest belong to the Muhammadan Sultāns of Kashmir. Among these we may specially notice a find of 37 copper coins contained in a small earthen vessel which came to light 56 feet east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple and six feet below the surface. Eighty-five of them belong to the coinages of Zainu-l-'ābidīn, Ḥaidar Shāh, Ḥasan Shāh, Muḥammad Shāh and Fath Shāh and the remaining two are of Tōramāna. This fact is interesting, as it shows that the coins of Tōramāna were still in abundant

use in the end of the 15th century. The Durrānī coins include one coin each of Timūr Shāh, Zamān Shāh, Maḥmūd Shāh and Nūru-d-dīn. The coin of Maḥmūd Shāh bears on the obverse the following Persian couplet :

بتوفیق اله خسرو گیتی سنان محمود شاه

The couplet on the coin of Nūru-d-dīn runs

سکه شد روشن ز شاه نورالدین

را یم از مخدوم قطب (العدنغین)

SCULPTURES.

In addition to the sculptures carved on the several stairs, the gateway and other parts of the edifice, the excavations yielded a large collection of Brahmanical statuettes all carved in the round. Most of these are of the same date as the temple itself and must originally have been enshrined in the recesses of the peristyle. It has been observed above that in some of the cells the pedestals of these images are still extant, and that on some of them the feet of images also remain. All of these early images found in the temple of Avantīsvāmi are Vaishṇava, except two fragmentary images, one of which represents the Ardhanārīśvara-Śiva (Plate XXVIII, *a* and *f*) and is fully described below. The other Śaiva image is a part of a Gaṇeśa statuette. Both of these statuettes, I am of opinion, must originally have belonged to the temple of Avantīśvara-Śiva described below, and must have been rescued and transferred to this temple after the desertion of that edifice.

I have discussed above the characteristics of the Kashmir type of the Vishṇu image. It is difficult as yet to throw any light on its early development, as no images of a date prior to the mediæval period have yet been noticed anywhere. The workmanship displayed in the execution of these statuettes is quite exquisite.

One more sculpture that deserves special notice here, is a figure of Śrī (ht. 8" ; width 4") which came to light west of the gateway. The goddess is seated (Plate XXVIII, *d*) in easy attitude on a throne supported on a pair of lions, while a pair of elephants are pouring water over her head. In her left hand she holds the leafy stalk of a lotus flower, which rises from a vase placed in front of the throne supported on a pot of ambrosia (*amṛitaghaṭa*). The object in her right hand is, in conformity to the *āgamas*, presumably a *bilva* fruit. It is interesting to note that an Indo-Greek image now preserved in the Indian Museum, London, which M. Foucher believes¹ to have originated from Kashmir, is very similar to the mediæval image of Śrī discovered in the Avantīsvāmi temple. M. Foucher noticed for the first time another statuette in the same style at a village called Brār between Bhavan-Mārtāṇḍa and 'Aishmaqām in Kashmir. From an examination of these two images M. Foucher arrives at the conclusion that the Brahmanical goddess Lakshmī has been derived from representations of the Buddhist Hārītī, consort of Kuvēra.

I subjoin a list of the principal sculptures :

- (1) Image of Vishṇu described on page 45.
- (2) Image (ht. 8" ; width 4") of Śrī described above.

¹ Foucher *Les images indiennes de la fortune in Memoires concernant l'Asie Orientale*, 1913.

- (3) Lower portion (ht. 1' 6") of an image of Vishṇu of the same type as No. 1.
The existing portion, which is broken into three fragments, contains only the feet of the deity, with a half-length figure of the Earth-goddess between them, a female chauri-bearer to the right, and a male attendant holding a fly-whisk to the left. The sculpture was found in the courtyard of the temple seven feet below the surface.
- (4) Image (ht. 2' 9½") of Vishṇu, without feet and arms, of the same type as No. 1. Found in the courtyard of the temple, six feet below the surface.
- (5) Image (ht. 2' 3") of Vishṇu of the same type as the above. The lower part of the legs, attendants and base are missing.
- (6) Fragment (ht. 1' 4½") bearing a figure of a female chauri-bearer. The fragment is broken from the proper right side of a statue of Vishṇu of the same type as No. 1.
- (7) Fragment (ht. 1' 3") representing a male chauri-bearer from the proper left side of a Vishṇu image of the same type as No. 1.
- (8) Fragment (ht. 1' 3½") showing a female chauri-bearer from the proper right side of a statue of Vishṇu of the type of No. 1.
- (9) Fragment (ht. 1' ½") similar to No. 8.
- (10) Upper half (ht. 11½") of a statuette in the round representing a male figure holding a mace in the right hand and wearing a garland and a three-peaked coronet. The statuette presumably represents a door-keeper.
- (11) Fragment (ht. 7") showing a female chauri-bearer which is broken from the proper right side of a Vishṇu image of the usual type.
- (12) Legs (ht. 1' 3½") of a Vishṇu image of the usual type.
- (13) Fragment (ht. 11½") showing both right hands of a Vishṇu image nicely carved.
- (14) Fragment (ht. 8") showing the left hand of a figure holding what appears to be a shield.
- (15) Fragment (ht. 8½") showing a bust of the Earth-goddess from a Vishṇu image of the usual type.
- (16) Fragment (ht. 6") of a Vishṇu image showing the right hand of a chauri-bearer and a portion of the deity's garland.
- (17) Fragment (ht. 6") similar to No. 16.
- (18) Fragment (ht. 5½") showing a male chauri-bearer broken from the proper left side of a Vishṇu image of the usual type.
- (19) Base (width 4½") with the feet of a Vishṇu image and those of the usual chauri-bearers.
- (20) Base (width 9½") similar to No. 19.
- (21) Base (width 4") similar to No. 20.
- (22) Fragment (width 6½") of a base similar to No. 21.
- (23) Fragment (ht. 4") representing the three heads of a deity, with elaborate coiffures.
- (24) Fragment (ht. 4½") showing the right arm of a celestial (*dēva*) followed by his spouse who held a chauri.
- (25) Fragment (ht. 7") showing a female figure.
- (26) Fragment (ht. 3½") showing head of a *garuḍa*.

- (27) Statuette (ht. 1' 9½") of Vishṇu of the same type and technique as No. 1. The feet of the deity, and the female chauri-bearer who stood to his right are missing. The statuette was found west of the gateway, 10' below the surface.
- (28) Fragments representing middle part of a four-armed seated figure, most probably Gaṇapati. The left hands hold a ball and staff (?) The lower right hand grasps a bowl, *i.e.*, *pāyasa-pātra*. The upper right hand is missing. The neck of the god was encircled with a snake. The sculpture is of the same date as the temples themselves. It was unearthed in the Avantīsvāmi temple, but originally belonged to the Avantīśvara temple.
- (29) Top of an umbrella (diam. 5"), which must have originally belonged to a miniature votive image. The underside of the umbrella is decorated with linear patterns and a band of circular rings. Images of Buddhas and Bōdhisattvas were protected with umbrellas in the Kushāṇa and earlier periods, and the same practice seems to have been followed in Kashmir for miniature statues which pilgrims presented at Brahmanical temples in the mediæval period. The umbrella is certainly of a much later date than the temple of Avantīsvāmi in which it was found.
- (30) Post (ht. 8½" including tenons), square in section, which must have belonged to an umbrella of the type of No. 29. The sides are adorned with zigzag patterns and there are round tenons at each extremity. The post is much later in date than the temple of Avantīsvāmi in which it was found.
- (31) Lower half of a statuette in the round representing Ardhanārīśvara-Śiva. The left half, in accordance with the canon, shows the female counterpart of the god and is, therefore, adorned with ornaments, namely, finger rings, bracelets and anklets. The right leg is clad in a *dhōṭī*, the tassels of which fall between the legs and on the thigh. The total number of arms of the deity is not known. The only arm that remains on the left and belongs to Pārvatī holds a nicely shaped pot (*kalaśa*). To the right of the deity stands a four-armed figure of Gaṇapati. His trunk rests on a bowl of sweetmeats (*mōḍaka*) held in his upper left hand. His upper right hand grasps his second tusk, which he used as a weapon in a fight with the demons. The emblems in the lower hands are indistinct. The figure standing to the left of the deity is Kumāra-Kārttikēya. He has six heads neatly arranged in two rows one above the other, but only six arms, instead of twelve. The attributes in the several hands cannot be recognized except one or two. These are a thunderbolt (*vajra*) in the lowest right hand, and a bell (*ghaṇṭā*) in the uppermost left. The bull, the vehicle of Śiva, is nicely carved on the reverse of the sculpture, his head only being visible on the front above the figure of Gaṇapati.

The sculpture is of the same date as the temples being described. It was found in the Avantīsvāmi temple, but was originally worshipped in the Avantīśvara temple. Plate XXVIII, *a* and *f*.

- (32) Plaque (ht. $4\frac{3}{4}$ " ; width $3\frac{3}{4}$ ") representing Pāñchika seated in easy attitude with his consort Hāritī seated to his left. Kuvēra holds what must be interpreted as a bag of money. His left leg is laid flat on an upturned treasure vase. Hāritī holds a cornucopia in her left hand. On the back of the plaque we notice the words: *Om svasti*, in Śāradā characters. The sculpture dates from the Muhammadan period. But though the workmanship is poor, the sculpture still follows the Gandharan models, and the original meaning of the emblems was not yet forgotten. Plate XXVIII, e.

POTTERY.

1. Large-sized jar (Kash. *wūṇ*! ; ht. $4' 10\frac{1}{2}$ " ; inner diameter at mouth $1' \frac{5}{8}$ ") with a conical bottom and bulbous body and a very low rim, which was used for the storage of grain or water. Such jars are made in Kashmir and used for the same purpose to this day, and in one or two of the jars discovered at Avantipura rotten corn was actually found. The jar is made of coarse clay, but well baked, though it now shows hardly any trace of any kind of colour-wash.

The jar is one of three of its kind which were unearthed a few feet above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple. That, however, does not mean that these jars are as old as the temple itself.

2. Large-sized jar (ht. $4' 7"$; diam. at mouth $1' \frac{1}{2}"$) of about the same shape as No. 1. The jar was standing quite close to No. 1.

3. Large-sized jar (ht. $4' 5"$; diam. at mouth $1'$) similar to the above. On the side of the jar is cut a brief record in late Śāradā characters. The inscription apparently contained a mere name of a pilgrim or a priest, but it is now quite illegible. The jar was standing close to Nos. 1 and 2.

4. Large-sized jar (ht. $2' 6\frac{1}{2}"$; diam. at mouth $9\frac{1}{2}"$) of the same shape as the preceding jars.

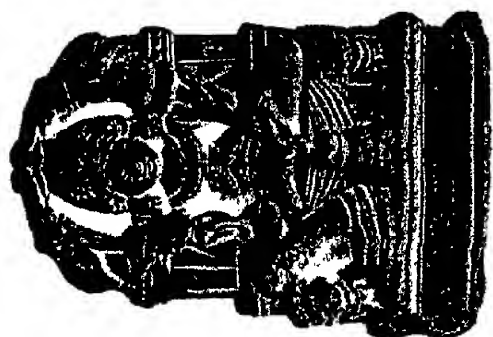
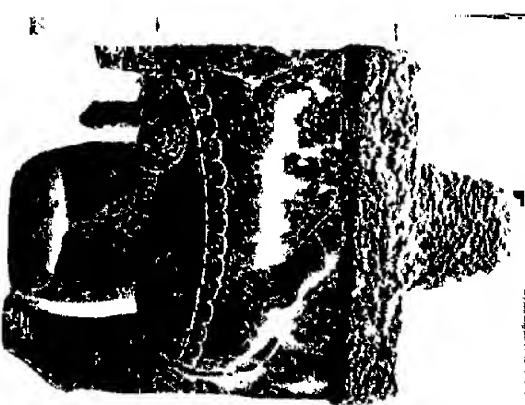
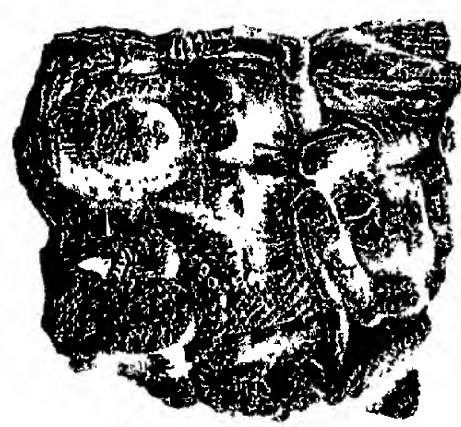
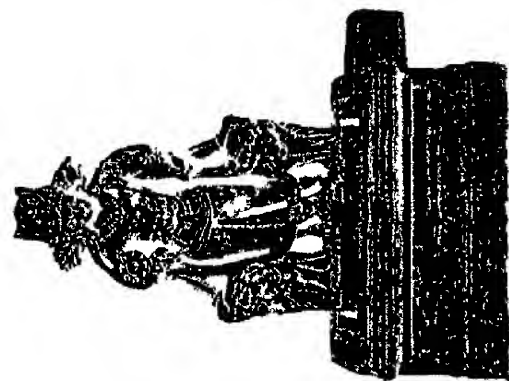
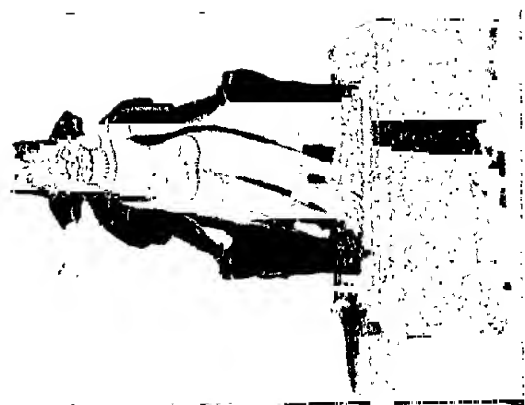
5. Jar (ht. $2'$; diam. at mouth $6\frac{1}{2}"$) with round bottom and grooved rim at the mouth, made of fine clay with traces of red colour. It was found only $2\frac{1}{2}'$ below the surface, to the south-east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, and is of a fairly modern date.

6. Jar (ht. $1' 7"$; diam. at the mouth $6"$) of the same shape as No. 5, made of very coarse buff clay with traces of red colour. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple near the surface.

7. Large-sized *gharā* (ht. $1' 7"$; diam. at the mouth $5"$) nearly spherical in shape, of fine buff clay which has been coloured red. Below the neck on one side is a square diagram with a dot at each angle. The jar was found outside the south-west corner of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, $6'$ below the surface.

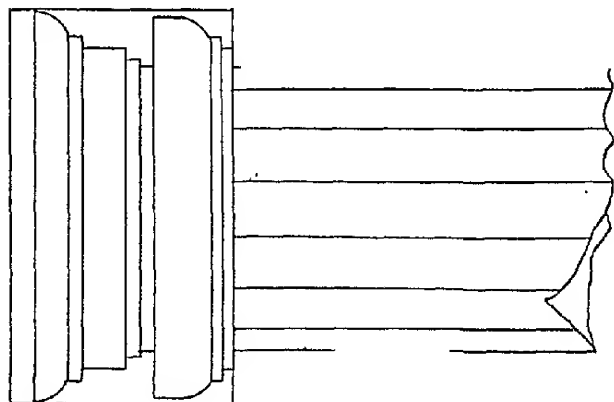
8. Pitcher or *gharā* (ht. $1' 5\frac{1}{2}"$; diam. at the mouth $4\frac{1}{2}"$) with a round bottom made of rough clay with red colour. The vessel was found $2'$ above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple.

9. Pitcher or *gharā* (ht. $1' 4"$; diam. at the mouth $4"$) of coarse buff clay with red colour. There is some simple decoration round the neck. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

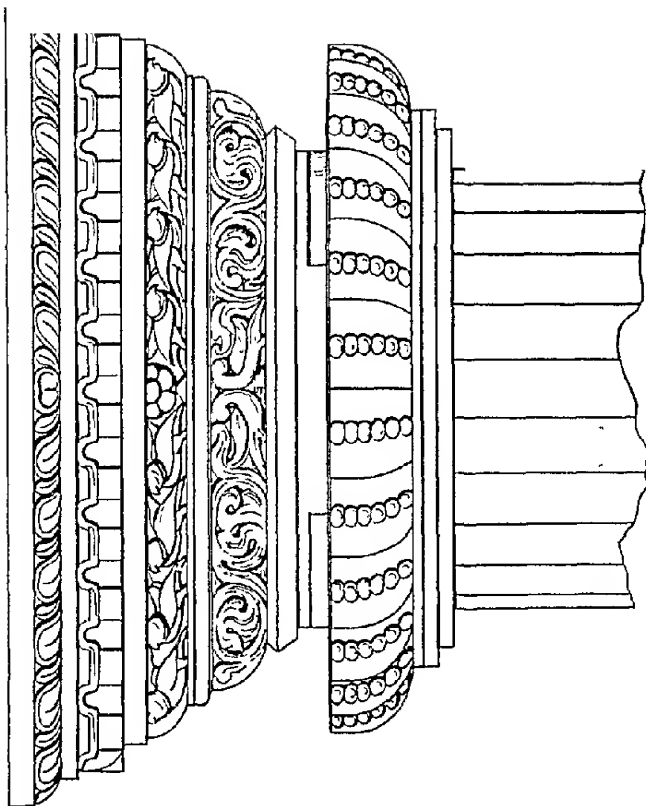


SCULPTURES AT THE AVANTIRYAM TEMPLE.

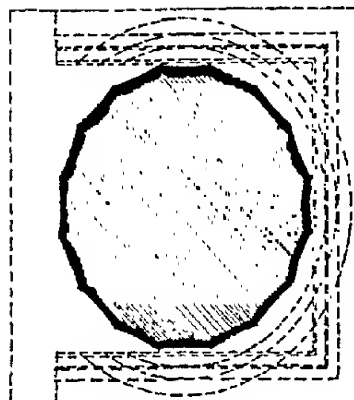
EXCAVATIONS AT AVANTIFUKA:
TEMPLE OF AVANTISVAMI (VISHNU).



ELEVATION.

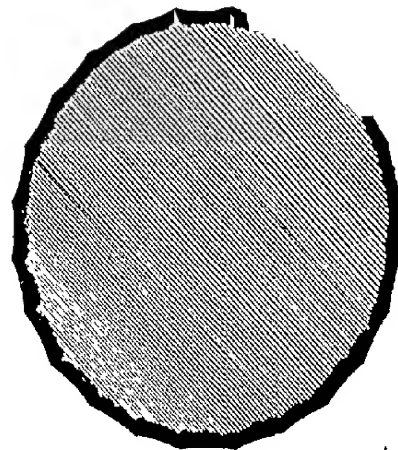


ELEVATION.



PLAN.

a, CAPITAL FROM COLUMN OF PERISTYLE.



PLAN.

b, CAPITAL FROM COLUMN OF ENTRANCE PORCH.

FOOT



10. Cooking pot or *hāṇḍī* (ht. 7" ; diam. at mouth 4") of ordinary shape, well baked with red colour. The pot is decorated with plain and dotted lines round the body. It was found to the south-west of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 4' below the surface.

11. Small water jar (ht. 6" ; diam. at mouth 4") of common shape. No ornamentation. Found to the west of the peristyle of Avantisvāmi temple, 4' below the surface.

12. Small water jar (ht. 5½" ; diam. at mouth 3¼") with lid. The body of the vessel is adorned with rows of circles and crescents. It is made of fine clay with a pink wash. The vessel was found outside the north-east corner of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 8½' below the surface, and is assignable to about the 15th century A.D.

13. Small water or milk jug (ht. 7" ; diam. at mouth 4¾") without neck. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

14. Small water jug (ht. 5½" ; diam. at mouth 4") originally furnished with a spout, which is broken off. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

15. Small water jug (ht. 6" ; diam. at mouth 3") with bulbous body, narrow neck and projecting rim adorned with raised concentric lines round the neck. There was a spout at the side which is now broken off.

16. Small water jug (ht. 5½") with the top broken off. Found in the area east of the peristyle, 7½' below the surface.

17. Small water jug (ht. 4") with narrow bottom, without top. It was found at the same level as No. 16.

18. Earthen brazier or *kāṅgarī* (ht. 5" ; diam. at mouth 4½") of the usual shape. The wicker-work frame is naturally gone. It is interesting to note that Jōnarāja refers to such braziers under the name of *kāshṭhāṅgarikā*. The vessel was found in the area on the east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 5' below the surface. To judge from the level at which it was found, we may assign it to about the middle of the 16th century A.D.

19. Cooking pot or *hāṇḍī* (ht. 5" ; diam. at the mouth 3").

20. Small water goblet or *surāhī* (ht. 5"), with spherical body and a very narrow neck. Found outside the north-west corner of the peristyle of Avantisvāmi temple near the original floor level.

21. Bowl (ht. 4" ; diam. at top 6¾"), which must have been used for eating rice-curry from. Fine clay with red colour. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple, 6' below the surface. It probably dates from the 15th century A.D.

22. Bowl (ht. 3¾" ; diam. at mouth 6¾") of dark-coloured clay adorned with some line patterns near the bottom. A part of the vessel is broken off. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple, 8' below the surface.

23. Object of burned clay (ht. 6¾" ; diam. at base 9") in the shape of a large ring with a handle at the top. Through the handle runs a hole. In the villages of Kashmir contrivances of this kind are used for twisting thread. Found in the area east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 4½' below the surface.

24. Small jug (ht. 5¾" ; diam. at mouth 2") of cylindrical shape with flat bottom made of coarse clay with red colour. Several jugs which came to light at the Jaubrāra

temple are of this type. Found in the area east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 9' below the surface.

25. Small jug similar to No. 24.

26. Child's fireplace (ht. 3") of the same shape as those used to this day by boatmen in Kashmir. Found in the area on the east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 4' below the surface.

27. Lid (ht. $1\frac{1}{2}$ ") of a small jar of the common shape. Found 3' below the surface in the area east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple.

28. Incense-burner (ht. 4") with the upper part and part of the handle broken off. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

29. Small jug (ht. 5") with a double rim around the neck, possibly an oil measure. Vessels of this shape are not now generally noticed in the bazars of Kashmir. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 2.

30. Child's cooking pot (ht. 4"; diam. at the mouth $2\frac{1}{2}$ "), found in the area east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, $6\frac{1}{2}$ ' below the surface. Pl. XXX, 15.

31. Small jar (ht. $3\frac{3}{4}$ "), found 6' below the surface inside the south-west corner of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple.

32. Potter's dabber (ht. 4") of the usual shape. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

33. Bottle (ht. $4\frac{1}{2}$ ") with tall narrow neck. Found on the west of the peristyle, 11 feet below the surface. Pl. XXX, 3.

34. Small goblet or *surāhī* (ht. $4\frac{1}{2}$ ").

35. Small goblet or *surāhī* (ht. $3\frac{1}{4}$ ") similar to No. 34. Found 3' above the level of the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 5.

36. Bottle (ht. $3\frac{1}{2}$ ") with a broad projecting rim of a pleasing shape. The clay is not very fine but the vessel was coloured red, traces of which remain. Found 3' above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 1.

37. Small jar (ht. 3"; diam. at mouth $1\frac{1}{2}$ ") of an attractive shape. Pl. XXX, 6.

38. Small jar (ht. $2\frac{1}{4}$ "; diam. at mouth $1\frac{1}{4}$ "), found $7\frac{1}{2}$ ' below the surface east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple.

39. Ink-bottle (ht. $2\frac{1}{2}$ ") of the usual shape. Found 6' above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 8.

40. Ink-bottle (ht. $2\frac{1}{4}$ ") similar to No. 39. Found in the area east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 7' below the surface. Pl. XXX, 7.

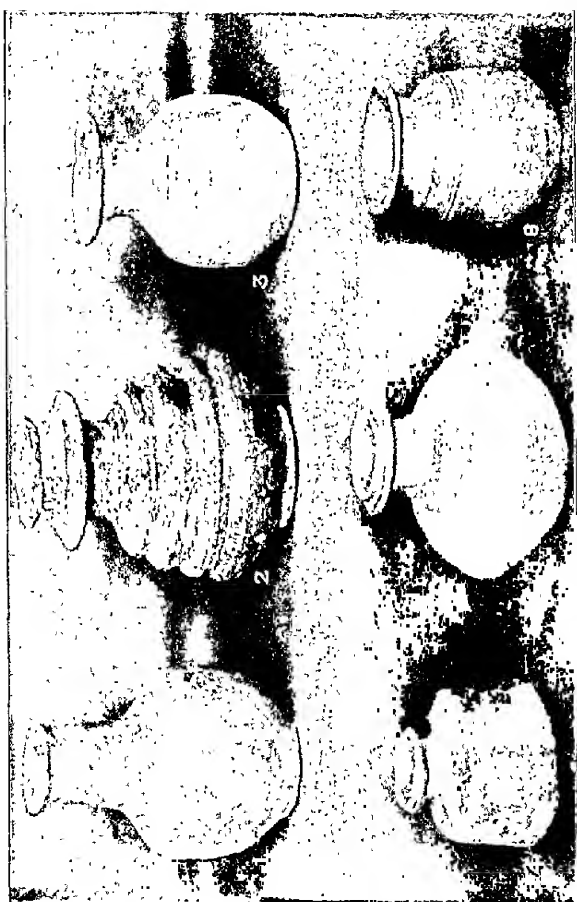
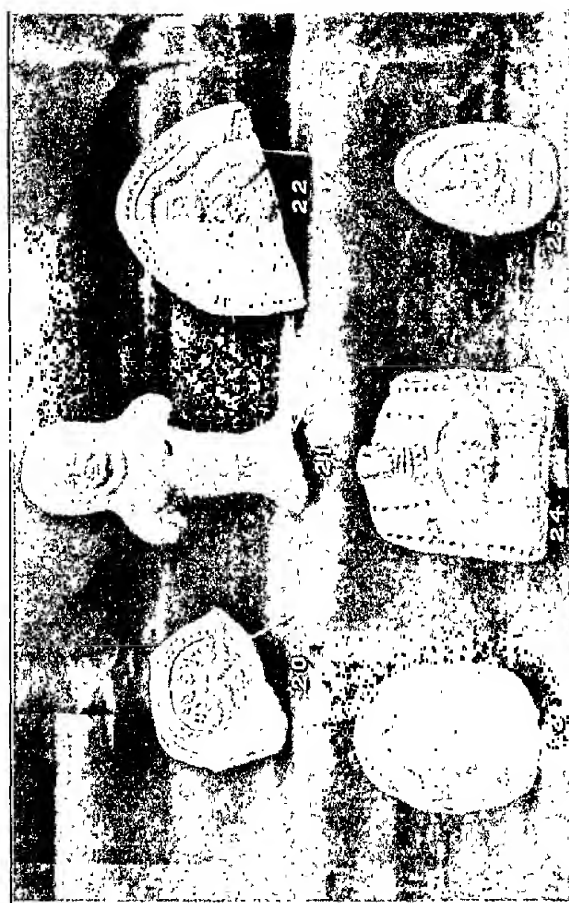
41. Toy cooking pot (ht. 2"; diam. at mouth $1\frac{1}{4}$ ") of the ordinary shape. Found in the area east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 7' below the surface.

42. Ink bottle (ht. $2\frac{1}{2}$ ") of a nice shape. Found 3' above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 4.

43. Ink bottle (ht. $2\frac{3}{4}$ ") with a flat bottom and hollowed out body. The pot was found 8' below the surface on the south of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 16.

44. Ink-pot (ht. 2") similar to No. 43 in shape, except that there is no neck. There are four holes round the mouth, which were used for suspending the pot from a wooden writing board. Found 8' below the surface near the gateway of the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 13.

45. Small bowl (ht. 2"; diam. at mouth $1\frac{3}{4}$ ") which has been probably used as



a. b and c. POTTERIES.
d. TERRACOTA FIGURINES.

an ink-pot, when white clay was employed as the writing substance. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 17.

46. Cup (ht. 2") with grooved rim, which has been used for sipping water (*āchamana*) in the *pūjā*. Found in the area east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 7' below the surface.

47. Rectangular basin ($4\frac{1}{4}$ " by 3" by $1\frac{1}{2}$ ") to hold rice grains or other materials of worship. The vessel is made of fine clay and coloured red. Found south of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, $2\frac{1}{2}$ ' below the surface. Pl. XXX, 18.

48. Bell (ht. $3\frac{1}{2}$ "), of usual shape. The tongue which was suspended by a piece of string is missing. Found south of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 6' below the surface. Pl. XXX, 19.

49. Miniature image hollow inside (ht. $2\frac{1}{2}$ ") in the form of a little *linga* on a circular pedestal furnished with a spout. Such images are offered to this day on the Śivarātri festival. The image was found 1' above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 10.

50. Miniature image (ht. $3\frac{1}{4}$ ") similar to No. 49. Found $2\frac{1}{2}$ ' above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 11.

51. Miniature image (ht. $2\frac{1}{2}$ ") similar to No. 49. Found south of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, 10' below the surface. Pl. XXX, 12.

52. Miniature image (ht. 3") similar to No. 49. Found 4' above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple.

53. Miniature *linga* (ht. 3") which formed part of an image similar to No. 49.

54. Miniature image (ht. 2") similar to No. 49, but unlike it, solid. Found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple, 6' above the floor.

55. Object (ht. $2\frac{1}{4}$ ") resembling an ink-pot. The bottom, however, is hollow and the article might have been used as a stand for a stick of *dhūpa* or other material. Found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple, 3' above the floor. Pl. XXX, 9.

56. Top (ht. 2") of a goblet with a perforated screen to prevent flies, etc., from entering the vessel. Found in one of the cells of the west colonnade of the Avantisvāmi temple, 7' below the surface. Pl. XXX, 14.

57. Lid (diam. $3\frac{1}{4}$ ") of a water jar perforated with holes for the passage of water. Found outside the south-west corner of the peristyle, $7\frac{1}{2}$ ' below the surface.

58. Small jar (ht. $1\frac{1}{4}$ ") ornamented with line patterns. Found $1\frac{1}{2}$ ' above the floor of the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple.

59. Top of a lid (ht. $1\frac{3}{4}$ "). Found in the area east of the peristyle of the Avantisvāmi temple, $3\frac{1}{2}$ ' below the surface.

60. Lid (ht. $2\frac{3}{4}$ ") of a pitcher or other vessel furnished with a vertical handle at the top. Found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple some 12' below the surface.

61. Lid (ht. $2\frac{1}{4}$ ") with a deep broad cavity in the middle. Such lids are not made now. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

62. Lid (ht. 2") of the shape of a bowl with broad rim. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

63. Incense-burner consisting of a round bowl (ht. $1\frac{3}{4}$ ") with a stout horizontal handle which is partly preserved. The burner is dark with soot. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

64. Circular cup (ht. $1\frac{1}{2}$ ") of black clay. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

65. Lid (diam. $3\frac{3}{4}$ ") of a pitcher or other vessel. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple.

66. Earthen lamp (diam. 3") of the usual type. The lip is burnt. Found to the south of the Avantisvāmi temple 5' below the surface.

67. Earthen lamp (diam. $2\frac{3}{4}$ ") of the usual type. The lip is burnt. Found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple, 7' below the surface.

68-69. Two earthen cups (diam. $3\frac{3}{4}$ " & $3\frac{1}{2}$ ") which have been used as lamps. Found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple, 3' above the floor.

70. Wheel (diam. $3\frac{1}{2}$ ") of a toy-cart (*mṛichchhakaṭika*) adorned on one side with two concentric rows of dots and a circular hole in the centre for the axle, which must have been of wood. It was found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple, 1' above the floor.

71. Fragment of a wheel (diam. 4") of a toy-cart of clay. Found south of the Avantisvāmi temple, 7' below the surface.

72. Circular object (diam. $1\frac{3}{4}$ ") with incised edge, and round cavity on each side, which might possibly have served the purpose of the third or hind wheel of a clay tricycle similar to those excavated at Bhītā and other sites in India. The cavities held the ends of a wooden frame which was attached to the axle of the front wheels. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

73. Circular object (ht. $1\frac{1}{2}$ "), convex on the upper side, with a circular hole in the centre which has been evidently used for the purpose of making twine. Such objects are used for that purpose to this day and are known in Kashmiri dialect by the name of *ḍugur*. Found outside the west wall of the colonnade of the Avantisvāmi temple, 13' below the surface.

74. Circular object (ht. 1") similar to No. 73. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple, $4\frac{1}{2}$ ' below the surface.

75. Lower part (ht. 2") of an earthen tobacco pipe (*chilam*). The bottom of the *chilam* proper is pierced with holes to let smoke escape without the ash running into the *hugga*. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple, 6' below the surface.

76. Top (ht. 2") of a goblet adorned around the mouth with a lotus pattern. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple, $5\frac{1}{2}$ ' below the surface.

TERRACOTTA OBJECTS.

1. Earthen mould (ht. $2\frac{1}{4}$ " ; width 2") representing, to judge from a plaster of Paris cast, a female deity seated in easy posture (*lalitāsana*), holding what looks like a lotus with stalk in each hand. To the proper left of the deity is an uncertain figure, meant possibly for a votary. Found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple, 2' above the floor.

2. Earthen plaque (ht. 3" ; width $2\frac{1}{4}$ ") containing a four-armed figure of Gaṇapati seated in Indian style under a trefoil arch. The deity has a dotted halo around his head, and as usual, a large belly (*tundila*). His elephantine trunk goes out, as usual, to a bowl of sweets held in his lower left hand. One of his right hands holds his second tooth, but the emblems in the remaining two hands are uncertain. The finger-mark on the back of the plaque is due to the pressing of the clay on to the

mould in the production of the impression. The tablet was found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple near the floor level, and would appear to be of about the same date as the erection of the temple. Pl. XXX, 23.

3. Terracotta plaque (ht. $2\frac{1}{2}$ ") showing Gaṇapati seated in easy attitude. He has broad ears and his trunk, as usual, rests on a bowl of sweets held in his left hand. The deity has only two arms. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple 6' below the surface. The style and the depth at which the tablet was found point to the 14th or 15th century as its date. Pl. XXX, 25.

4. Female figure (ht. $4\frac{1}{2}$ ") wearing a long loose garment; the legs are not indicated. A plain band round the throat presumably does duty for a necklace. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 21.

5. Part or handle of an earthen vessel bearing a grotesquely shaped female votary seated in Indian style with hands joined before the chest. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple, 5' below the surface. The fragment is assignable to the 14th or 15th century. Pl. XXX, 24.

6. Upper part (ht. 3") of a terracotta tablet showing a female figure seated in the same fashion as No. 5. Found at the same place and at the same depth as No. 5, with which it is coeval. Pl. XXX, 22.

7. Fragment (ht. $1\frac{1}{4}$ ") of an earthen vessel bearing the crossed legs of a seated figure. Found outside the south-west corner of the Avantisvāmi temple, 6' below the surface.

8. Bottom (width $2\frac{1}{4}$ ") of an earthen bowl bearing on the inside a pair of *garuḍas* facing each other. The fragment was found at the Avantisvāmi temple. Pl. XXX, 20.

9. Fragment (ht. 5") of hollow earthen pedestal of a terracotta image. The spout, which is well preserved, has the shape of a bull's head from which it may be inferred that the image was a Śaiva one. The fragment was found at the Avantisvāmi temple about 6' below the surface.

10. Terracotta bird (ht. 2"), found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

11. Broken figure (ht. $2\frac{2}{3}$ ") of a quadruped of a rough shape which would seem to have been originally mounted on terracotta wheels. Found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple, 6' below the surface.

12. Roughly shaped figure of a sheep (ht. $1\frac{3}{4}$ ") found in the area east of the Avantisvāmi temple, 8' below the surface.

13. Bust (ht. 3") of a horse of a late date. Found at the same place as No. 12.

14. Figure (ht. 2") of a horse with saddle, without head and tail, of no interest.

15. Fragment (ht. $2\frac{1}{2}$ ") of a terracotta horse. Found in the courtyard of the Avantisvāmi temple near the floor level.

16. Cylindrical object (length $1\frac{1}{2}$ ") of clay, which must have served the purpose of a matrix for stamping ornamental patterns on pottery, etc. Found at the Avantisvāmi temple.

AVANTĪŚVARA TEMPLE.

This temple is situated half a mile below the temple described above, like which it was also buried under earth and débris. The courtyard has now been completely

excavated with the exception of a small portion which has been left undisturbed, in order to facilitate the excavation and repairs of the central shrine. A complete plan of the edifice has not yet been drawn, as the inner plan of the central shrine has yet to be definitely ascertained.

Like the Avantisvāmi temple, this temple consists of a central shrine surrounded by a peristyle, which has entirely perished, except its basement, which is well preserved and is six feet in height. General Cunningham assumed that the recesses of the peristyle were preceded by porticoes supported on pillars similar to those in the Avantisvāmi temple, and he restored the pillars in his plan. This assumption of General Cunningham was mostly wrong; for we find that there were pillars only on the outside of the west row all the bases of which have survived. On the inside there is absolutely no evidence of any kind of pillars in front of the cells. General Cunningham's plan shows the total number of cells to have been 86. It is difficult to ascertain the correctness of this statement, as there are no traces now left of their foundations except in the west row, which contained twenty recesses besides the gateway.

The gateway to the peristyle is a much smaller and simpler structure than the gateway of the other temple. It consists, as usual, of two chambers, each of which measures 14' 9" by 12' 0" internally. There are no projecting porticoes on each side of the gateway, as we noticed in connection with the Avantisvāmi temple. The courtyard is not paved. It measures 201' 6" east to west, and 173' 10" north to south and not 191' by 171' as General Cunningham makes it.

The central shrine must have been an imposing structure, but as it has not yet been completely excavated, its precise dimensions cannot be ascertained. The terrace is square, 57' 4" along each side, and about 10' high. Attached to each corner is a platform about sixteen feet square, which must have originally supported a small subsidiary shrine, no traces of which have been preserved. These shrines were built at the same time as the temple itself. From each face of the terrace projects a stair, which must have led to an entrance on each side of the temple. Three of these stairs have been completely excavated. Their flank walls are excellently preserved, but the steps are mostly ruined. They are being repaired as far as possible. The doorways were rectangular with horizontal lintels, preceded by porches with trefoil arches enclosed in pediments. The spandrils of the trefoil arches were adorned with female figures, presumably the river goddesses. The interior of the central shrine is still covered with a heap of large stones, and it is not yet known if any fragments of the image of Avantisvara-Mahādēva, which was worshipped in this temple, will be found.

When General Cunningham published his plan¹ of this temple, the building was entirely covered with débris, and it is natural that his plan should be faulty and conjectural in many respects. I shall only notice the salient defects. General Cunningham was aware that the temple had four doorways, and the fact that his plan shows only one entrance on the west side and closed niches on the others must have been due to an oversight. Secondly, his plan makes the length of each side of the temple 82½ feet, and relying upon this, he expressed the opinion that this temple must have been 165' high and the loftiest edifice not only in Kashmir, but in India. In

¹ J. A. S. B., 1848, Pl. XVII.

reality the length of each side is 57' 4" only. What happened was that General Cunningham mistook the basements of the subsidiary shrines referred to above as parts of the same terrace. This, however, is not the case, as the spaces between these platforms and the stairs were originally hollow. The temple has consequently no claim to the great height supposed by General Cunningham.

From the carved blocks of the superstructure that have come to light during the excavation, it is obvious that the central shrine itself must have been largely adorned with sculptures. It is also clear that it was intended to ornament the other parts of the edifice, the gateway and the stairs, etc., similarly. These carvings were however, never completed.

In the way of small antiquities, this temple did not yield much. The most noteworthy find was a collection of 108 copper coins, which were found in a small earthen jar two feet below the surface of the ground to the west of the gateway to the peristyle. Thirty-two of these coins are worn. The rest include twenty-two coins of Tōramāna, one coin of Śaṃkaravarman (883-902), one of Diddā-Kshēmagupta (950-958), seven coins of Diddā (980-1003), three coins of Saṅgrāmarāja (1003-1028), two coins of Ananta (1028-1063), two coins of Kalaśa (1063-89), thirty-four coins of Harsharāja (1089-1101), two coins of Sussala (1112-1120 and 1121-1128), two coins of Jayasimhadēva (1128-1149), and one of a king whose name is Vijayasuta-Simhadēva. General Cunningham published a coin of this last-mentioned ruler.¹ His reign lasted from 1287-1301 A.D. His father was presumably Lakshmadēva or Lakshmaṇa, who preceded him on the throne of Kashmir, though his relationship to that king is not distinctly mentioned by Jōnarāja.² But why he is designated as "the son of Vijaya" is not clear. Jōnarāja³ tells us that Simhadēva in a single day bathed Vijayēśvara, i.e., the Mahādēva image of Vijbror with milk worth a lac of gold coins. Is it possible that Simhadēva's attachment to that deity gave him that patronymic.

One other small object deserves notice. It is a dish of bell-metal about 10" wide and 1½" deep at the mouth. The upper edge is curved outside. The vessel was found broken into many pieces. There is no writing of any kind incised on it. It was found a few feet below the surface in the courtyard of the temple.

The temples of Avantipura was destroyed at the end of the 14th century A.D. by Sikandar, nicknamed Butshikan. It is obvious, however, that some parts of Avantisvāmi temple were brought into use again at some later date, as two of the cells (Nos. 5 and 6) of its peristyle were found to contain numerous fragments of birch-bark manuscripts of a late date. These manuscripts contain accounts of articles of worship such as oil, *dhūpa*, etc., used in the temple. Another proof of the re-occupation of the temple is afforded by a short Śāradā inscription cut on a large-sized earthen jar which reads *Om mahā śrī Avantivarma-ghata 1583*. The date is presumably referable to the Vikrama era, and should correspond to A.D. 1527. The donor of the jar must have been a pious pilgrim,

¹ *Coins of mediæval India*, Pl. V, 29

² *Second Rājatarāṅgīnī*, Bombay Edn., vv. 118-137.

³ *Ibid* verse 127.

though his name is not recorded. The inscription is the only independent documentary evidence of the connection of Avantivarman with the town and temple of Avantipura.

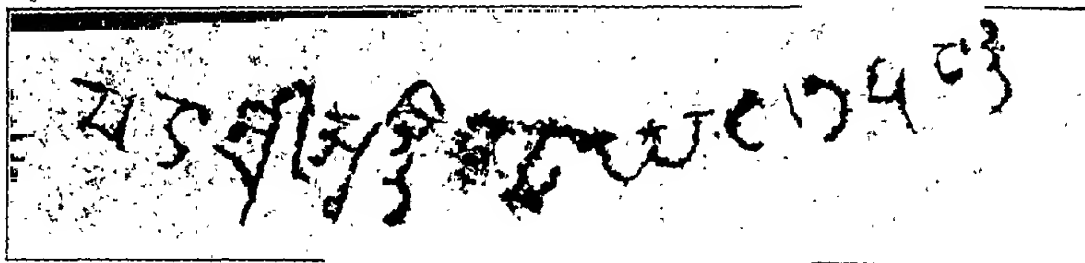


Fig. 1. Avantivarman's inscription.

DAYA RAM SAHNI.